BENGALURU, SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 2024 www.Bangaloremirror.com 16 Pages PRICE ₹4

Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

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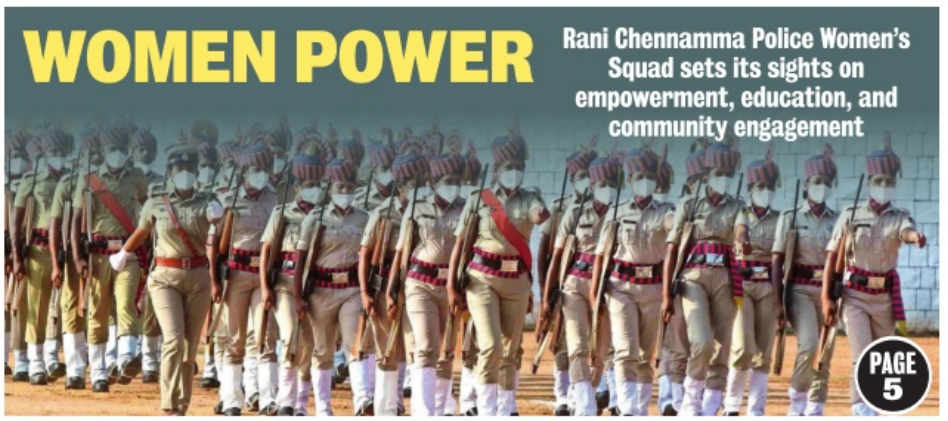
WOMEN POWER
Rani Chennamma Police Women's Squad sets its sights on empowerment, education, and community engagement
PAGE 5

FAST & FURIOUS
67 people have lost their lives due to heavy rains this year in a monsoon that has been intense and destructive
PAGE 6

BBMP's tall claims aside, city's arterial and sub-arterial roads are filled with craters — so much so that even ministers, MLAs feel the jitters now

BAD PITS OF BENGALURU

Survey shows 432 km of roads in poor condition due to asphalt layer peeling off

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The condition of city roads has become so dire that it's not just residents protesting anymore—now even a minister is publicly demanding action. Recently, Revenue Minister and Byatarayanapura MLA Krishna Byre Gowda took to X, sharing videos of the deteriorating road conditions on the ORR-Hebbal stretch.

He urged either the BBMP or BMRCL to take immediate steps to repair the roads. It should not have reached the point where ministers themselves, out of helplessness, have to plead with officials to fix potholes. Many citizens have mocked the officials, questioning whether they will ever respond to public grievances. Even Dasarahalli MLA S Muniraju has complained of poor condition of roads.

Despite tall claims made by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), a majority of the arterial and sub-arterial roads in the capital, spanning a distance of 432 km, are riddled with potholes. The condition of the ward roads is beyond description, reflecting the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda recently took to X urging the BBMP and BMRCL to fix the ORR

> "The BBMP, responsible for road maintenance, seems indifferent, acting as if the breaking of riders' backbones or fatalities from falling into potholes are of no concern. Potholes have appeared not only on main roads but also on flyovers
> —Sandhya Kumar, activist

Rivers in the clear

State pollution board writes to Central agency to delist 6 rivers from polluted river stretches

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The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) has written to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to delist six rivers in the state from polluted river stretches. Once done, Karnataka will only have 10 polluted river stretches.

The state pollution control board has asked for the delisting of Sharavathi, Gangavalli, Aghanashini, Krishna, Kagina, and Nethravathi as the biological oxygen demand (BOD) value of these rivers has not crossed 3mg/litre in the last four years.

The board has clarified this in a report submitted to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) after the court took suo motu cognizance of an article that appeared in Bangalore Mirror on January 10. The news report, based on the water quality analysis of 12 rivers in the state under the central government's National Water Monitoring Programme (NWMP), had underlined that nine rivers in Karnataka had stretches with poor water quality (class D).

Following the report, NGT sent notices to the state govt and KSPCB, asking for a reply.

According to KSPCB, a CPCB's report to analyse the water quality data of the years 2019 & 2021 recorded substantial improvement in the water quality of five river stretches, namely Kali, Yagachi, Malaprabha, Asangi Krishna, and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Culinary delights

Calling all foodies in the city! Vijay Karnataka and Bangalore Mirror, along with Vega City Mall, create a delightful food festival for the residents of Bengaluru to experience the taste of VV Puram Food Street. All foodies are invited to come and enjoy mouth-watering delicacies.
Where: Vega City Mall, BTM Layout
When: Until August 18, 11 am to 10 pm

02 Rajasthani exhibit

The exclusive sale of handloom, handicraft, jewellery, sarees, and dress materials is underway at the 'Grand Rajasthani Exhibition.' The exhibit is all about the use of traditional handloom skills to create contemporary lifestyle products. It brings together rural artisans from the eastern part of India, featuring vast collections of cotton and silk handlooms and handicrafts, Orissa tie and dye, West Bengal cotton sarees, home decor and gift items, and many more.
Where: VV Convention Hall, Babusapalya;
When: Until August 18, 10 am to 9 pm

03 Education fair

Here's an opportunity for students seeking admission in undergraduate, post-graduate, and doctorate programs to meet with representatives from more than 80 accredited universities and colleges from across the United States at the 'Study in the US' fair. The education fair is hosted by EducationUSA, the US government's official source of information on US higher education. Details and registration: https://bit.ly/EdUSAFair24Emb. **Where: Hotel Taj, MG Road;**
When: August 18, 2 pm to 5 pm

Healthcare halted: Karnataka doctors join nationwide strike

Medical services hit in state: No routine OPDs, elective surgeries; all emergency services remain unaffected

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Doctors and medical students protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Saturday

Medical services were disrupted across Karnataka on Saturday as doctors went on strike, protesting the brutal death of a trainee doctor in Kolkata last week. The strike was part of a nationwide protest organised by the Indian Medical Association (IMA). While emergency services remained unaffected, routine OPDs (outpatient departments) and elective surgeries would not be conducted during the strike.

The IMA had called for a 24-hour nationwide withdrawal of medical services starting at 6 am on Saturday up to 6 am on Sunday in protest against the RG Kar incident. The association has also demanded a Central Act (Central Protection Act for Doctors) to protect medical professionals from violence in their workplaces.

Scene at hospitals in Bengaluru

Meanwhile, many patients were affected as OPDs were closed at several hospitals. At Victoria Hospital, there was a long queue of patients waiting for treatment on Saturday. "My uncle came from Kolar and has been waiting for two hours at the OPD. We were eventually advised to take him to the emergency department for treatment," said Afshan Banu, a patient, adding, "I wanted to consult a dermatologist for my son, but since the OPD was closed, we have to return on Monday." Even the other associations extended their support for the protest. Shatrunjay Sharan, a physiotherapist, said, "The Indian Association of Physiotherapists (IAP) had also extended its support to the IMA, and hence we also supported the bandh call by shutting down our OPD services."

Doctors assured of safety

No incidents of violence were reported in Karnataka, but doctors strongly condemned the incident in Kolkata and called for increased safety measures for medical professionals, particularly women.

Meanwhile, the Union Health Ministry reassured doctors on Saturday that it would take all necessary measures to ensure their safety, as medical services were affected in various states due to a nationwide strike called by the IMA. The ministry announced plans to form a committee that would propose measures to safeguard healthcare professionals.

Various associations present at the meeting expressed their concerns regarding the safety and security of healthcare workers in their workplaces. The ministry acknowledged the demands of the representatives and pledged to make every effort to ensure the security of healthcare professionals. "The representatives of all the associations were informed that the government is well aware of the situation and is sensitive to their demands," the ministry stated.

It was noted that 26 states have already enacted legislation to protect healthcare workers within their jurisdictions. Given the increasing cases of dengue and malaria, the ministry urged the protesting doctors to return to their duties.

No local Mpox cases: Health experts urge caution among citizens

City health experts emphasise that no cases of Mpox (monkeypox) have been reported locally, and there is no need for panic three days after the World Health Organization declared Mpox a "public health emergency of international concern."

A health expert said that it is crucial that the public stays informed about the symptoms and modes of transmission of Mpox, but it's equally important to understand that, at this time, there is no immediate threat in our region. "Our healthcare systems are well-prepared to handle potential cases. Strict measures, such as thermal screening at airports and ports, are designed to prevent any outbreak. Early detection and isolation are key to managing any infectious disease. By following the guidelines laid out by the WHO and our health authorities, we can significantly reduce the risk of Mpox spreading in our community," he explained.

He further added that if one experiences

symptoms like unexplained rashes, and especially if you have travelled recently to areas where Mpox is prevalent, seek medical advice immediately. "With proper precautions and timely medical intervention, Mpox is manageable, and most cases recover fully without complications."

Mpox is a viral zoonotic disease primarily found in the tropical rainforest regions of Central and West Africa, with occasional cases exported to other areas. It is generally self-limiting, with symptoms like skin rashes or mucosal lesions that can last 2-4 weeks, along with fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy, and swollen lymph nodes. It enters the body through broken skin, the respiratory tract, or mucous membranes such as the eyes, nose, or mouth. It spreads through physical contact with an infected person, contaminated materials, or infected animals.

In July 2022, a suspected case involved an Ethiopian who arrived in the city for medical treatment at a private hospital, and the central government urged all states to stay vigilant for possible cases, advising them to maintain a high level of suspicion for individuals with unexplained rashes who had travelled to a country with confirmed or suspected Mpox cases in the past 21 days. If a case is confirmed, contact tracing must be initiated immediately to identify anyone who had contact with the patient in the last 21 days.

— BMB

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Heavy vehicles chip away chunks of road

Movement of lorries, water tankers ruin 1-km stretch of road in Gulimangala; residents of area struggle to commute as panchayat lacks funds for repairs

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Residents of Gulimangala and hundreds of students are struggling to commute on the one-kilometre stretch between Madduramma Temple and Smrithi Academy due to severe potholes and craters. This road, which becomes a nightmare for motorists during the monsoon, is causing significant expenses for mechanical repairs due to the poor road conditions.

The road stretch falls under the jurisdiction of Huskur Panchayat, which lacks the necessary funds to repair it."The road was restored a few months ago but the condition of the road is back to square one due to heavy vehicular traffic, especially water tankers. Around 100 water tankers commute on this road to fetch water from borewells at nearby areas," said Lakshmi Venkatesh, president, of Huskur Panchayat.

Residents of Singasandra, Kammasandra, Gulimangala, and Huskur are urging authorities to repair the road to ensure smooth commuting. They believe that asphalting the road would help many students reach school on time." Around 20 different school buses are plying on this road during the weekdays. The condition of the road is extremely poor and hazardous. Huge concrete mixing lorries, water tankers, and waste collection tractors crowd the road alongside two-wheelers, auto rickshaws, and cars with children. The chaos is overwhelming, especially between 7:45 am to 9 am and from 2:30 pm onwards. Do we citizens deserve this?" asks Prasanth Palakkadiyil, a resident of Singasandra.

Left: A stretch of the road between Smrithi Academy and Madduramma Temple at Gulimangala of Huskur panchayat; Right: A heavy vehicle on the already deteriorated road

Expressing a similar opinion, Ganesh Babu R, a resident of Kammasandra said, "I am not happy with the condition of the road. I am finding it tough to drop my children at school due to the bad condition of the road. Road accidents have become a routine affair on this road," said Ganesh Babu.

Meanwhile, Ravi M, former president of Huskur Panchayat, stated that the road was in good condition until the last three months. "Heavy vehicles, especially the number of water tankers, are responsible for the bad condition of the road. I was told that Huskur Panchayat is taking measures to fill up potholes on the road. I hope it begins without any delay," said Ravi.

> **"Condition of road is extremely poor and hazardous. Huge lorries, water tankers crowd the road. The chaos is overwhelming**
> – Prashanth P, resident

However, Huskur Panchayat Development Officer, Anusuya B said that she had convened a meeting with water tanker owners to find a solution to the problem. "The road belongs to the Public Works Department. We cannot afford to spend money on that road. We will take some measures to provide a temporary solution soon," said Anusuya.

Motorists are anticipating relief from the pothole-ridden road, with a resolution still pending.

Ditch the deadlines, get city's roads fixed

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

negligence of the municipality. BBMP has jurisdiction over 1,344.34 km of arterial and sub-arterial roads. According to a survey conducted by the BBMP engineers, 432 km of roads are in poor condition due to the wearing off of the asphalt layer. A survey on the condition of the 11,534.5 km of ward roads has only just begun, which serves as a mirror to the administrative system.

BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath expressed concerns about the ongoing metro construction by BMRCL, stating, "Wherever BMRCL is constructing metro stations, they are acquiring more land and installing pillars, which are damaging our drains. Mud is filling it up, and the entire drainage system needs to be redesigned. On the Yelahanka to Airport Road, due to the Blue Line construction, the drains have been damaged, and we have requested BMRCL to redesign the drains once the Metro works are completed."

Meanwhile, traffic police have announced that starting Sunday until August 21, BBMP will undertake pothole repairs on the service road from Veerannana Palya towards Hebbal Circle.

Sandhya Kumar, an activist said, "Most roads in the city are filled with potholes, revealing the poor administration. The rain has exposed the poor maintenance and quality of the roads. The BBMP, responsible for road maintenance, seems indifferent, acting as if the breaking of riders' backbones or fatalities from falling into potholes are of no concern. Potholes have appeared not only on main roads but also on flyovers. The already congested roads are further burdened by the lack of maintenance and gross negligence of the authorities."

BBMP, which manages an area of 12,878.84 km of roads, is responsible for bringing them into this state. Potholes have emerged everywhere, with metro construction on one side, stormwater drain construction on another, and other challenges further complicating the situation. Recently, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, during a visit to rain-damaged areas, remarked that "roads are deformed by up to half a foot deep due to rain. Other roads have deep potholes". Despite this, the authorities have not woken up to the situation.

Crores of rupees spent

Sources said that a sum of Rs 15 lakh has been allotted to each ward to cover potholes, totaling Rs 33 crore for 225 wards. Besides, hundreds of crores of rupees are being spent on the development and maintenance of arterial and sub-arterial roads. However, roads that were developed at the cost of crores of rupees have become riddled with potholes in just a few days. Many accidents occur daily across the city, with a significant number of bikers and pedestrians losing their lives.

Rs 4,500 per tonne payment

Officials said that to fix the potholes on the major roads, the BBMP has set up a hot asphalt mix plant in Kannur on the city's outskirts. The plant, established at a cost of Rs 7.50 crore, is not being fully utilised. The Kannur plant can produce 50 loads of hot mix at 160 degrees Celsius in 10 hours, at a rate of 120 tonnes per hour. The contract for the plant's operation and maintenance, as well as the responsibility for filling potholes on major roads, has been awarded to JMC Construction Private Limited. The contracting company is being paid approximately Rs 4500 per ton for the asphalt mix and pothole repairs. However, there are allegations that the company is not supplying enough asphalt mix, leading to delays in pothole repair work since the plant became operational.

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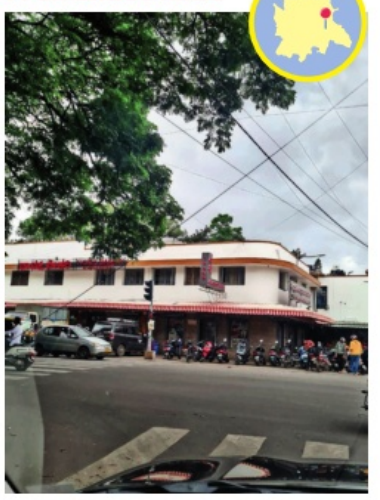
Pothole problem

Ashok Nagar

Ashok Nagar Old Police Station Road, which is riddled with potholes, is now filled with rainwater, making it hard to navigate and creating a breeding ground for pests.

Cable danger

Promenade Road



A cable dangerously tied to the bollard at Promenade Road's entry is endangering commuters' lives.

Road damage

Kodihalli

Unauthorised dumping and neglect of regulations have severely damaged 80 Road in Kodihalli, CV Raman Nagar constituency, cutting the road in half.

Police crack series of 2-wheeler thefts, seize 39 stolen vehicles

South Division's JP Nagar and Thalaghattapura police stations cracked down on a series of two-wheeler thefts, recovering a total of 39 stolen vehicles worth approximately Rs 27 lakh.

According to Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Lokesh Jagalasar, in the past three months, 50 two-wheeler vehicles were recovered in Subramanyapura subdivision, 38 in VV Puram subdivision, and 100 in Jayanagar subdivision.

The JP Nagar police apprehended two suspects from Ragigudda Quarters in JP Nagar and recovered 32 stolen two-wheelers with a total value estimated at Rs 22 lakh within a day of a theft complaint by a man, whose two-wheeler was stolen from East End Road in JP Nagar 3rd Phase. According to the police, he had parked his vehicle and gone to a nearby hotel for lunch when the theft occurred.

Cops review CCTV footage while investigating a theft case in this file photo

The breakthrough in the case came after the police reviewed CCTV footage. "A member of the Women's Personal Safety Team identified one of the suspects, following which a five-member team was formed, and we successfully tracked down the suspects near Ragigudda Quarters," a police official told BM. Upon questioning the suspects, it was revealed that the second suspect (A2) had hidden 12 stolen two-wheelers in Vellore district at a vacant plot in Paranampettu village. The remaining 20 were found parked at various locations around Bengaluru.

"We urge citizens to prioritise their safety by parking in more secure locations, such as areas with CCTV surveillance, paid parking lots, or places with regular policing

In another similar case, the Thalaghattapura police arrested a man for stealing seven two-wheelers worth up to Rs 5 lakh. According to the police, the arrest followed a theft complaint by a plumber who had parked his vehicle in front of a house on 4th Cross, Manjunath Nagar, near Raghuvanahalli.

The police apprehended the suspect and seized a two-wheeler in his possession on August 8. During interrogation, the suspect confessed to stealing six other two-wheelers, which were found parked in a vacant lot adjacent to his residence. With this, seven cases of two-wheeler theft registered at the same police station were detected.

Talking to BM, Jagalasar said, "This is a significant concern for us. Most vehicle thefts in our division occur in areas like JP Nagar, Banashankari, Jayanagar, and Puttenahalli. Often, people park their vehicles and leave them unattended for extended periods of time, which thieves take advantage of. While we strive to solve these cases, we urge citizens to prioritise their safety by parking in more secure locations, such as areas with CCTV surveillance, paid parking lots, or places with regular monitoring."

Atiya Firdos

Women's police expand reach to all subdivisions in city

Following recent PG murder, Rani Chennamma Pade patrols city PGs, create awareness about various crimes among women

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The Rani Chennamma Pade, a team of highly-trained women police personnel originally formed to empower women and girls through education on self-defence and harassment prevention, has now expanded its reach to cover all subdivisions, encompassing 13 police stations in the city, prioritising empowerment, education, and community engagement.

Launched in 2021, the squads initially operated only in the Koramangala area. Following the Koramangala PG (paying guest) murder case, the squad expanded significantly to create awareness among men and women PGs.

R Thulasi, personnel of the Rani Chennamma Police Women's Squad, reported that the team has been actively visiting various men's and women's PG accommodations in the area. "We provide information on phone and laptop theft prevention, safety measures, and how to file cases related to sexual harassment and other crimes. We have also conducted educational sessions about drugs and self-defence at different schools," Thulasi said.

"We emphasise the importance of 'Area Domination' in slum areas. Our squad tries to instil confidence among residents, encouraging them to report crimes and reassuring them of our support

Thulasi further shared instances where college-going female students have approached them for help. "A student from Jyoti Nivas College, 5th block, Koramangala, complained to us of a stranger following her up to the nearest petrol bunk. When we were on alert at the location the next day and tried to get hold of him, he somehow managed to escape and was never seen again. There was no such issue again, the girl told us."

The squad now has three WhatsApp groups, each subdivided by department, including all female police personnel and officers. Issues related to harassment or other concerns are posted in these groups for immediate action. The squads have also shared their personal numbers within these groups for any emergencies.

The team is dedicated to building confidence and trust among the people. With a dedicated team of 20 constables, the team conducts foot patrols. Night duties around pubs and bars are carried out three times a week.

"We emphasise the importance of 'Area Domination' in slum areas. Our squad tries to instil confidence among residents, encouraging them to report crimes and reassuring them of our support," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East Division) Sarah Fathima.

She further added that their efforts are focused on breaking the barriers that often prevent people from seeking help. Adding on, she also stated that they have received positive responses from the people. "The positive feedback from the citizens highlights the increased safety and confidence they now feel due to our efforts," DCP Fathima added.

Chaotic scene on Tumkauru Road

A group of people were seen tossing two scooters from the flyover on the National Highway near Adakamaranahalli, Tumakuru Road, in a viral video on Saturday. According to the police, a group of miscreants were performing wheelies and dangerous stunts, trying to instill fear among other motorists on the highway. They were also said to have collided with other vehicles on the road, which triggered the public, who tossed the scooters from the flyover to pieces. "The accused have been caught, and their vehicles have also been seized; further investigation is underway," said the Nelamangala Traffic Police. **BMB**

Tree collapse takes auto driver's life

A tragic accident occurred in MC Layout, Vijayanagar, on Friday as a tree fell on a moving auto, killing the driver. The incident took place around 7:30 pm when a local auto driver, Shivrudraiah, was ferrying passengers despite the inclement weather. As he navigated through MC Layout, a large tree, weakened by rain, suddenly collapsed onto his vehicle. Passersby immediately rushed to the scene and managed to pull the injured driver out of the wreckage. He sustained critical injuries to his head and chest and was rushed to the hospital, but he succumbed to his injuries. **BMB**

2 kids die in tipper lorry accident

A tipper lorry reportedly driven recklessly lost control and ran over two children playing in front of their house near Guddadahalli on Mysore Road on Friday Despite immediate rescue attempts by bystanders, they could not be saved. The police have arrested the driver, who is now in custody on charges of reckless driving and causing death by negligence. The incident has left the local community in mourning and has sparked demands for stricter traffic safety measures to prevent such tragedies in the future. **BMB**

THE SUNDAY READ

RAIN RAMPAGE

Heavy monsoon rains cause 67 deaths, widespread damage, and crop losses; urgent repairs and better coordination needed as more rain is forecasted

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This year's monsoon has been both intense and destructive, resulting in widespread damage across the state. Tragically, 67 people have lost their lives due to the heavy rains, with 29 of these deaths attributed to house collapses. As a result, there is an urgent need to evacuate and rehabilitate people living in dilapidated houses in both urban and rural areas. The rainfall has also caused significant agricultural losses, with an estimated 81,589 hectares of crops damaged. Additionally, 1,283 houses have been damaged by more than 75%, further highlighting the severity of the situation.

Rainfall statistics and forecast

From June 1 to August 15, the state received 22% more rainfall than usual. Chamarajanagar, Mandya, and Tumkur recorded the highest rainfall, while 13 districts experienced more than normal rainfall, indicating good rain across the state. The Meteorological Department has predicted continued rainfall in the southern interior, northern interior, coastal, and Malnad regions over the next four weeks. Although nine taluks, including Siruguppa, Devadurga, Aurad, Bidar, Kamalanagar, Hubli, Shahapura, and Yadgir, have received below-normal rainfall, forecasts suggest these areas will soon receive adequate rain as well.

Positive outlook for agricultural output

Despite the challenges, the abundant rainfall is expected to boost agricultural output. So far, 70 lakh hectares have been sown against the year's target of 82 lakh hectares, with expectations to exceed the target. Pre-monsoon crops such as urad dal and green gram are ready for harvest, and state reservoirs are filled to 89% capacity, ensuring sufficient water supply.

Will bulldozers roar again?

During the Friday meeting, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah outlined several directives to tackle the challenges brought on by the heavy monsoon rains. He underscored the urgent need to clear encroachments on rajakaluves (stormwater drains) to prevent flooding and mitigate damage. Additionally, he issued instructions to manage water levels in lakes by installing gates during the rainy season, aiming to avoid overflows. The Chief Minister stressed the importance of vigilance in Bengaluru, directing the Chief Commissioner of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to hold daily meetings to assess and address the city's situation. He also mandated that Zonal Commissioners meet regularly to assign responsibilities to engineers and implement necessary precautionary measures. Siddaramaiah made it clear that negligence in duty would result in strict disciplinary action.

Moreover, the Chief Minister stressed the need for seamless coordination among various agencies, including the Bangalore Development Authority, Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited, and BBMP, to ensure the efficient drainage of rainwater in cities and towns. He highlighted the importance of regular drain cleaning as a preventive measure. To further bolster the state's infrastructure against the monsoon's impact, Siddaramaiah announced the release of Rs. 210 crore for the repair of state highways.

More rains in store

The state is expected to experience increased rainfall in the coming days. Dr N Puviarasan, a scientist at the India Meteorological Department, reported that current synoptic conditions indicate a cyclonic circulation over South Interior Karnataka and its neighbouring regions, extending up to the middle tropospheric level. Additionally, a trough is present from North Interior Karnataka to the Comorin area, crossing the cyclonic circulation in the lower tropospheric level.

As a result of these weather patterns, isolated heavy rainfall is highly likely to occur in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts. Other districts such as Belagavi, Dharwad, Vijayapura, Gadag, Kodagu, Chikkamagaluru, Hassan, Shivamogga, Tumakuru, and Chitradurga can also expect isolated heavy rain and thundershowers. Light to moderate rain and thundershowers are predicted across many parts of the remaining districts in Interior Karnataka and the Uttara Kannada district of Coastal Karnataka. In Bengaluru, residents should anticipate a cloudy sky with moderate rain and thundershowers. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be around 30°C and 21°C respectively.

From June 1 to August 15, state receives 22% more rainfall than usual. Chamarajanagar, Mandya, and Tumakuru record highest rainfall, while 13 districts experience more than normal rainfall

The hills have eyes

Environmentalist and author Dr Kalkuli Vittal Hegde, who is spearheading the environmental movement in the Malnad areas in Karnataka, said unscientific methods of development and scant respect for the structural integrity of hills were among the reasons for incidents of landslides in Shiroor and Wayanad recently.

"Too much use of fossil fuels and irresponsible development models has resulted in a great degree of topsoil erosion on both sides of the Western Ghats, which is a barometer of the environmental health of the Southern Peninsular region," he said.

Hegde is the first environmental expert on the Malnad regions (hilly terrain) of the southern peninsular region, to collect rain-related statistics from 1895 to 2020 and beyond until the current monsoon.

"We were already warned by unexplained occurrences of cyclones even on the western seaboard of the Arabian Sea since 2020. But we chose to ignore the signals, and now we have enough and more rain than the typical monsoons every alternative year and the increase of volumes of rain in certain areas like Kodagu, Wayanad, the coastal region, and the slopes of Western Ghats on the western region is fearsome. This is what happened both in Shiroor in Uttara Kannada and Wayanad in Kerala in the past month," the environmentalist said.

"Wayanad received 23 inches of rain on that fateful day, causing heavy erosion of the topsoil that covers the rocky surface and loosening the boulder belt beneath the topsoil, causing a boulder avalanche in Wayanad," he pointed out.

Major landslides hit the Mundakkai and Chooralamala regions of Wayanad on July 30 almost decimating both the areas, leaving over 230 people dead.

Concerning Shiroor, he analysed that unscientific methods of development and scant respect for the structural integrity of the hills had caused the landslide. The lopsided designs of the development of the National Highway, taking a four-lane highway through a laterite plate, cutting through it, and exposing porous laterite soil encased inside, led to the landslide.

"Even the hills and mountains have their own unique weight distribution pattern, The water content inside the hills and mountains determines the weight distribution, but when the foot of such hills and mountains is cut for a highway project, it tips off the weight of the natural structure, resulting in massive landslides. It could be recalled here that the Kodagu landslides were also triggered due to unscientific development models in 2018," he said.

"I would not hesitate to point out that landslides are indicators of larger environmental degradation and climate change due to the lifestyles of the people living in the cities. People living in rural areas are facing the brunt," Dr Hegde said.

Aerial view of tea plantations affected by landslides in Wayanad

Furore over Governor's sanction to prosecute CM

State alleges political conspiracy, while opposition continue to bay for action in MUDA case

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Political controversy around the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam' escalated on Saturday when Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot approved the prosecution of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in relation to the case. The Siddaramaiah-led State Government dismissed the move as a conspiracy and a ploy to destabilise the government.

Prosecution sanctioned

Earlier, Governor Gehlot had granted permission for the prosecution of Siddaramaiah, emphasising the necessity of conducting a neutral, objective, and non-partisan investigation. After examining the petition, supporting materials, Siddaramaiah's reply, and the state cabinet's advice along with legal opinion, Gehlot expressed his satisfaction that the allegations and evidence prima facie indicate the commission of offences. The Governor found the decision of the Council of Ministers, which advised him to withdraw the show cause notice to the Chief Minister and reject the prosecution sanction application, to be "irrational." He noted that there are two versions related to the same set of facts, necessitating an impartial investigation. Based on the facts and circumstances, Gehlot accorded sanction against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah under "Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and Section 218 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023" for the alleged offences mentioned in the petitions filed by TJ Abraham, Pradeep Kumar SP, and Snehamayi Krishna.

BJP-JD(S) padayatra, in relation to the MUDA 'scam,' attracted a huge crowd as it traversed the hinterland in Mandya district

CM Siddaramaiah expresses his intention to challenge the decision in court and engage in a legal battle to defend himself

Single-member committee

Pointing to the constitution of a committee under the chairmanship of Venkatachalapathy, IAS, and a high-level single member inquiry committee under the 'Commission of Inquiry Act 1952' to probe the alleged scam, Governor said, it appears from the terms of reference of the high-level single member inquiry committee that there are serious allegations involving illegal allotment of alternative sites, illegal allotment of land and irregularities in allocation of land. The Governor highlighted that the petitions in question seek sanction against Siddaramaiah, and the Cabinet resolution was passed by his own colleagues who were appointed on his advice. Given that the sanction is sought against the CM himself, the circumstances surrounding the show cause notice being placed before the Cabinet and the Cabinet's advice to withdraw the notice would not inspire confidence in acting on such advice.

CM refuses to quit

CM Siddaramaiah firmly rejected the idea of resigning from his position, on Saturday. He maintained his innocence and asserted that he has not committed any wrongdoing that would warrant his resignation. Siddaramaiah strongly criticised the Governor's decision, labelling it as "anti-Constitution and against law." He expressed his intention to challenge the decision in court and engage in a legal battle to defend himself.

'Why no action?'

The CM questioned that petitions against JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy and former BJP Ministers Shahshikala Jolle, Murugesh Nirani, and Janardhana Reddy have been pending for a considerable time without any action being taken. He specifically mentioned a petition from November seeking sanction against Kumaraswamy, a former Chief Minister, in an alleged case related to the issuance of mining licenses, which was investigated by the Lokayukta. Siddaramaiah questioned the lack of action taken against Kumaraswamy in contrast to the prompt notice issued to him.

State-wide protests

On Saturday, Congress workers and supporters organised demonstrations on Saturday in various parts of the state, including Bengaluru, Mysuru, and Mandya, to protest against the Governor's decision to allow the prosecution. In Bengaluru, the Congress workers and members of the Karnataka Pradesh Kurubara Sangha gathered in Gandhi Nagar, demanding the removal of the Governor. They expressed their discontent by chanting slogans against Gehlot, burning his effigies, and carrying placards that read "Remove Governor, Save State".

Oppn demands resignation

BJP, meanwhile asked Siddaramaiah to step down from his post to ensure an impartial probe into his alleged role in scam, while welcoming the governor's decision to sanction his prosecution in the case.

Suspected of killing wife, man ends life

In a tragic turn of events, Mahesh Kumar, the prime suspect in the murder of his wife Meena, was found dead on Saturday afternoon. The 45-year-old is said to have ended his life at a vacant plot near his office in Doddakammanahalli.

Meena was found dead in her home on Friday evening. Police said that the couple often used to argue over an alleged extra-marital affair. The argument between the two escalated on Friday evening, and in the heat of the moment, Mahesh allegedly struck Meena on the head with a rod, resulting in her death.

Meena's son, Ananda, found her body when he returned home from work. He immediately filed a complaint at the Hulimavu Police Station, suspecting his father of the crime.

The police investigated and the next day around 3.30, Mahesh was found dead. **-Atiya Firdos**

Publisher RS Rajaram no more

RS Rajaram, who was synonymous with Navakarnataka Publications with the motto "Serving mankind through books," passed away due to age-related ailments at his residence here on Saturday. A state Rajyotsava award winner, Rajaram, aged 83, is survived by a son and daughter, according to family sources.

Established in 1960, Navakarnataka Publications has, for the last more than six decades, been striving to develop book culture by way of publication and distribution of books dealing with a wide range of subjects. A leader in the field of book publishing and distribution, it has always sought to reach different strata of readers by organising book exhibitions and cultural activities, mainly in Karnataka.

Navakarnataka has published more than 6,000 titles, most of them in Kannada and around 400 in English. **-PTI**

Road via Bhadra Tiger Reserve gets green signal again

Despite protests, PWD makes Rs 33-crore proposal to develop road shut in 2018

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Despite protests from environmentalists, the Public Works Department has prepared a proposal for a Rs 33 crore project to develop the road from Attigundi to Kemmannugundi within the Bhadra Tiger Reserve area and submitted it to the government. As a result, there is a possibility that human traffic will resume within the tiger reserve's environment.

This road passes through the Bhadra Tiger Reserve area, and in 2018, several restrictions were imposed on traffic. A ban on vehicular movement was enforced from 6 pm to 6 am, and the then District Commissioner ordered that no public movement was allowed during the day without permission. Since then, road development in the area was put on hold, and the government did not prioritise it due to the lack of significant human traffic. The distance from Attigundi to Kemmangundi is 16 kilometers. To return to Kaimara and reach Kemmangundi via Lingadahalli, one has to cover 71 kilometres. After the traffic restrictions, the interior road became completely dilapidated, making it impossible for vehicles to travel. Currently, only jeeps can traverse this road.

The locals had previously requested the government to reopen the road for vehicular and human traffic since a road already existed. Hence, the government is now planning to develop the road. Sources said that PWD officials have prepared a plan to construct a 10-kilometre asphalt road.

Vehicular traffic will impact free movement of wildlife in Bhadra

If the road from Attigundi to Kemmangundi is made accessible to tourists and the public, it will facilitate travel to Kemmangundi for visitors coming to see attractions like Mullayanagiri, Bababudangiri to Manikyadhara Waterfalls.

If vehicular traffic begins, it will disrupt the free movement of wildlife. Therefore, officials are considering imposing certain restrictions, such as prohibiting vehicles from stopping anywhere along the route. There is also a plan to enforce a night-time traffic ban, among other restrictions, according to an official who spoke to the press. When contacted KJ George, District In-Charge Minister, Chikkamagaluru said, "There was already a road from Attigundi to Kemmangundi. Without any expansion, we will develop the existing road to its current extent. We are moving forward with road development while considering both environmental conservation and development."

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

SYMBIOSIS

A cattle egret looking for transport at the edge of Bellandur lake. Egrets travel on the backs of cattle. The bird pays back for the ride by eating the pestering ticks on cattle skin

The picture was clicked by reader **Shreya Oruganti**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

City's lungs expand with new forest park

17 acres land reclaimed from encroachers to be converted into a forest park and aviary

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Bengaluru to get a new forest park and aviary on 17 acres of land in Kothanur which was recently reclaimed from encroachment. Valued at approximately Rs 500 crore, this land was originally designated as a forest area by district officers in 2006 but had been overtaken by encroachers, leading to a prolonged legal battle by the forest department to reclaim it. The new forest park will serve as a vital green space for Bengaluru residents, while the aviary will feature a large, tree-filled enclosure housing a variety of bird species. The land's reclamation, finalised in January 2023 after successful legal proceedings in the High Court and Supreme Court, marks a significant step towards restoring the area's ecological value. Local residents have expressed enthusiasm for the project, which promises to offer both recreational and educational benefits.

Meanwhile, the forest department is planning on what can be done once it reclaims the forest land in Peenya. This has turned into political controversy with Union Steel minister HD Kumaraswamy saying that HMT has not done anything wrong and that it will not return the land. However, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre has stuck to his stand of reclaiming the land. Khandre had earlier issued clear instructions to reclaim forest land in Peenya Industrial Area which is valued at over Rs 10,000 crore. This directive has been communicated through a note to the Additional Chief Secretary of the department. Khandre said, "This land, declared as forest under Section 9 of the Forest Act of 1878 and officially notified on June 11, 1896, was originally under the jurisdiction of the Mysore

Land's reclamation finalised in 2023 after successful legal proceedings in the High Court and Supreme Court

Maharaja. However, it was transferred to the Central Government-owned HMT industry through a gift deed by former district officers, bypassing proper legal procedures. Such forest land cannot be legally gifted, and there was no formal process to change its designation for non-forest use. The Supreme Court has reinforced that once land is classified as forest, it retains that status indefinitely, highlighting that environmental concerns take precedence over other rights. Consequently, the sale of this land by HMT to various entities, including government departments and private individuals, is deemed illegal." The minister also criticised the lack of action from forest officials and has ordered the immediate reclamation of 281 acres of the 599-acre plot that remains undeveloped. He has also called for an investigation into the issue and the withdrawal of the 2020 interim application filed in the Supreme Court to remove the land's forest designation.

DID YOU KNOW?

Earth's largest living structure are coral reefs. Not only are coral reefs stunning examples of nature, but they are also the largest living structure on the planet. The intricate structures known as coral reefs are created over time by the accumulation of calcium carbonate skeletons built by colonies of microscopic creatures called coral polyps. In addition to serving as a natural barrier that keeps coasts safe from erosion and storms, coral reefs are immensely diverse and essential to the health of the ocean ecosystem. Regrettably, a number of environmental issues, such as ocean acidification, and global warming, are posing a threat to coral reefs. Studies have indicated that for the past thirty years, the acidity of our oceans has increased, causing harm to marine organisms. Ocean colour, temperature, and salinity may be measured by satellite technology, which allows scientists to monitor changes in ocean chemistry and identify regions that are experiencing acidification.

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

9591233247

Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

TAPTHECHATTER

where Bengalureans speak their mind

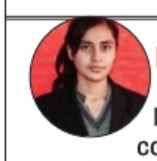
Which public transportation mode do you find most convenient for getting around Bengaluru?

Gourav Kumar N, BM Reader
Within the city, BMTC is a convenient way of transportation. BMTC provides transportation facilities at an affordable price. Since I have to travel on a daily basis, personal transport is physically straining and other modes are expensive.

Kumar, BM Reader
Namma Metro offers traffic-free transportation and reaches destinations rapidly. Traffic in Bengaluru is well-known, hence metro is a more convenient option. Though it's still developing, its hassle-free nature makes me opt it.

Dr Ravi Kumar, BM Reader
Auto rickshaws are a popular and convenient mode of public transportation. Autos have an ability to navigate through the city's bustling traffic with ease. Autos can be hailed directly from the street and via apps.

Pavithra A, BM Reader
As a regular user of Namma Metro, I find it to be an absolute lifesaver. It's so easy to use and incredibly convenient. I can just hop on a train and go without worrying about traffic or finding a parking spot. Plus, it's always on time.



Deepa S, BM Reader
Even though it's not very safe, I find that bike taxis are a convenient mode of transportation for its comfort and low cost. Due to motion sickness, I find it uncomfortable to travel in cars, auto or buses.

Nagendra S, BM Reader
Namma Metro connects the entire city and makes it easier for people to travel without facing traffic congestion. It's also very affordable which helps people from all backgrounds access it without struggle.

SPEAK TO US

Tell me about a cultural event or festival in Bengaluru that you always look forward to attending

If you want to be featured in this section, mail us your answer to this question, in 25 words, with 'Tap The Chatter' in the subject line. Mail us with your name, occupation & a picture at WhatsApp us on 9591233247 or mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

HEALTH TIP: Pineapple contains vitamin C which helps you achieve softer and shinier hair

With its astringent properties, lemon tea can, over time, enhance skin health by removing dead skin cells

BangaloreMirror 9
Sunday, August 18, 2024
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Smoothly done

Monsoon smoothies for immunity and energy

PINEAPPLE SMOOTHIE

Pineapple is rich in vitamin C and bromelain, which helps to reduce inflammation and also boosts immunity. Bananas and coconut water give you natural energy, while Greek yoghurt is rich in protein and probiotics. Spinach contains vitamins and minerals, and chia seeds are rich in omega3 fatty acids.

INGREDIENTS
- 1 cup pineapple chunks
- 1 banana
- ½ cup coconut water
- ½ cup Greek (or thick)) yoghurt
- 1 tsp chia seeds
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ cup spinach

METHOD
- Blend together all the ingredients.

GREEN SMOOTHIE

Spinach is rich in iron, vitamins and minerals, while green apples give you natural sweetness. Cucumber helps with hydration, and avocado gives you healthy fats. Lemon juice adds flavour and boosts vitamin C.

INGREDIENTS
- 1 cup spinach; 1 green apple
- ½ cucumber; ½ avocado
- 1 tsp lemon juice; 1 cup water/coconut water

METHOD
- Blend all the ingredients together until creamy.

APPLE SPICE SMOOTHIE

Apple is rich in fibre and vitamin C, and cinnamon helps to regulate blood sugar levels. Greek yoghurt contains protein, almond butter gives you healthy fats and some protein, while flax seeds are rich in omega3.

INGREDIENTS
- 1 apple, chopped
- ½ cup unsweetened almond milk
- ½ cup Greek yoghurt
- ½ tsp cinnamon powder
- 1 tbsp flax seeds
- 1 tbsp almond butter

METHOD
- Blend all the ingredients together until smooth.

GINGER CITRUS SMOOTHIE

Oranges and grapefruit are rich in vitamin C, and ginger offers anti-inflammatory benefits. Carrots contain beta-carotene, and yoghurt is packed with probiotics and supports your gut health. Honey is a natural sweetener.

INGREDIENTS
- 1 orange, segmented
- ½ grapefruit, segmented
- 1 small piece fresh ginger (fresh)
- ½ cup carrot juice
- ½ cup yoghurt
- 1 tbsp honey

METHOD
- Blend all the ingredients together until smooth

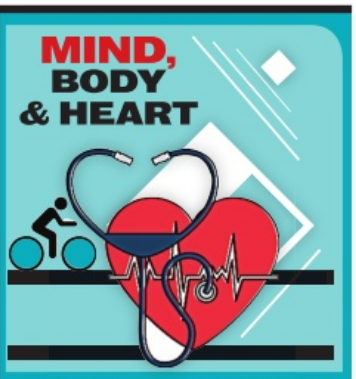
BERRY BEET SMOOTHIE

Beetroot is a great source for boosting immunity and stamina. Mixed berries are rich in antioxidants and vitamin C, and almond milk gives you vitamin E.

INGREDIENTS
- 1 cup cooked beetroot
- 1 cup mixed berries
- ½ cup almond milk
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp chia seeds

METHOD
- Blend all the ingredients together until smooth.

by Dr Rohini Patil, Nutracy Lifestyle, for Femina



All you need to know about...

Relationsbip red flags

Delicate balance
Navigating the delicate balance around toxicity is no easy feat, so we asked Bumble's Relationship Expert, Ruchi Ruuh on tips to identify toxic traits in potential partners. Below are the biggies you shouldn't ignore:

Dismissive Attitude
They're dismissive and quick to disregard your thoughts, emotions, or opinions without engaging in discussion or consideration.

Rigid Gender Roles
They follow and expect you to adhere to strict, outdated gender roles. Look out for remarks like 'Good women don't act like that' or 'That's not a man's job' if you're with someone. Any kind of communication that is offensive to you—or in general—is an immediate big red flag.

Lack of Emotional Expression
Notice if they're consistently avoiding vulnerability or there is no show of emotions. Some people do have difficulty in expressing themselves emotionally but seeing emotions as a weakness is a sign of toxic masculinity.

Disregarding Boundaries
Pay attention to how they handle your personal boundaries. Especially if they consistently push them without consideration, like asking you to do things despite your discomfort, know that it's a red flag. Remember that boundaries are important.

Insensitive Jokes
They make jokes that objectify or demean others. This behaviour goes unnoticed most times as they would ask you to be less sensitive or 'lighten up'.

Go with your gut
What constitutes a red flag differs from person to person, but you'll know it when you see it, or at least get a weird feeling.

–Femina

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6 rivers are out of the red zone, claims KSPCB

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Kumaradhara, and replaced them with other five rivers, namely Dakshina Pinakini, Tenpennai, Sharavathi, Gangavalli, and Aghanashini.

"KSPCB has pleaded to delist Tenpennai as the river stretch does not fall under the state of Karnataka Boundary and the CPCB has accordingly agreed to delist the Tenpennai river stretch," noted the report.

Action plan ready

The state pollution watchdog has also informed the tribunal that an action plan is being implemented to provide Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) for all cities located on the banks of the polluted river stretches. The STPs, which are under construction and are in the proposed stage, will be established by the end of December 2024.

"The KSPCB is regularly reviewing the monthly progress reports from all the stakeholders such as BWSSB, KUIDFC, DMA, and irrigation departments. The KSPCB is further continuously pursuing different stakeholders for providing STPs for the treatment of sewage generated from the cities located on the banks of polluted river stretches and to establish solid waste treatment facilities. It is noted that there is no industrial discharge into the rivers," said KSPCB.

Currently, KSPCB monitors 12 rivers in Karnataka under the Central Government's National Water Monitoring Programme (NWMP), including Arkavathi, Lakshmantirtha, Tungabhadra, Bhadra, Cauvery, Kabini, Kagina, Krishna, Shimsha, Bhima, Netravati, and Tunga.

Under the programme, the water quality of these rivers is monitored at 38 locations. Out of these, 19 locations recorded water quality under class D – suitable only for the propagation of wildlife and fisheries.

These locations include all five monitoring stations of Arkavathi and Lakshmantirtha, two stations of Tungabhadra, one station of Cauvery, both stations each of Kabini and Kagina, all three stations of Shimsha, two stations of Bhima, and both stations of Tunga Rivers.

The water quality report (of November 2023) also highlighted that the biological oxygen demand of some of these stretches is as high as 8, the faecal coliform levels at some stations have reached 2,60,000 MPN/100 ML, and total coliform bacteria have increased to 2,80,000 MPN/100 ml.

As per CPCB standards, the permissible level of faecal coliform bacteria in waterbodies considered suitable for bathing, contact water sports, and commercial fisheries is 100 MPN/100 ml. Similarly, in waterbodies suitable only for industrial cooling, aesthetic purposes, navigation, and controlled waste disposal, the permissible level of faecal coliform bacteria is 500 MPN/100 ml.

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I, Tabassum Banu W/o Mohammed Farukh R/o No:- Azeem Residency No 401 2nd Main 8th Cross Lic Colony Jayanagar 3rd Block East Bangalore 560011 have changed my name to Tabassum Banu M for all purposes.

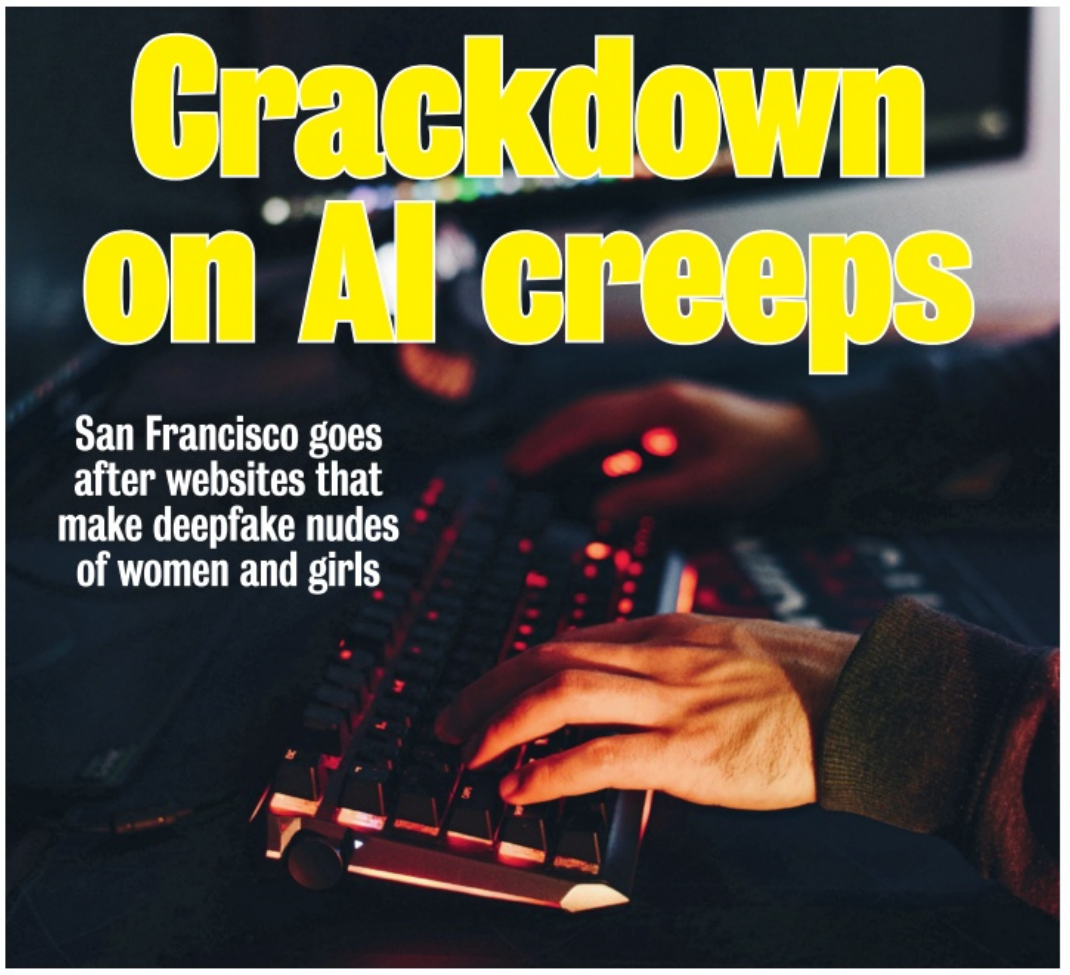
I, Mohammed Fahad Kareemu llah R/at No.16/1, Jolly Masjid road, Jolly Mohalla, Cottonpet Bengaluru-560063 have changed my name to Mohammed Fahad, affidavit dt 12.07.2024, Notary R Basavaraja, Bangalore.

I, Naseeba Taj Aslam Pasha R/at No.16/1, Jolly Masjid road, Jolly Mohalla, Cottonpet Bengaluru-560063 have changed my name to Naseeba Taj, affidavit dt 12.07.2024, Notary R Basavaraja, Bangalore.

I, Sheerin Banu Aslam Basha W/o Aslam Basha R/o No:- 40/1 4th Street New Bethlehem Ambur Vellore 635802 have changed my name to Seerin Banu For All Purposes

Crackdown on AI creeps

San Francisco goes after websites that make deepfake nudes of women and girls



Nearly a year after AI-generated nude images of high school girls upended a community in southern Spain, a juvenile court this summer sentenced 15 of their classmates to a year of probation.

But the artificial intelligence tool used to create the harmful deepfakes is still easily accessible on the internet, promising to "undress any photo" uploaded to the website within seconds.

Now a new effort to shut down the app and others like it is being pursued in California, where San Francisco this week filed a first-of-its-kind lawsuit that experts say could set a precedent but will also face many hurdles.

"The proliferation of these images has exploited a shocking number of women and girls across the globe," said David Chiu, the elected city attorney of San Francisco who brought the case against a group of widely visited websites based in Estonia, Serbia, the United Kingdom and elsewhere. "These images are used to bully, humiliate and threaten women and girls," he said in an interview with The Associated Press. "And the impact on the victims has been devastating on their reputation, mental health, loss of autonomy, and in some instances, causing some to become suicidal."

The lawsuit brought on behalf of the people of California alleges that the services broke numerous state laws against fraudulent business practices, nonconsensual pornography and the sexual abuse of children. But it can be hard to determine who runs the apps, which are unavailable in phone app stores but still easily found on the internet.

Contacted late last year by the AP, one service claimed by email that its "CEO is based and moves throughout the USA" but declined to provide any evidence or answer other questions. The AP is not naming the specific apps being sued in order to not promote them.

"There are a number of sites where we don't know at this moment exactly who these operators are and where they're operating from, but we have investigative tools and subpoena authority to dig into that," Chiu said. "And we will certainly utilize our powers in the course of this litigation." Many of the tools are being used to create realistic fakes that "nudify" photos of clothed adult women, including celebrities, without their consent. But they've also popped up in schools around the world, from Australia to Beverly Hills in California, typically with boys creating the images of female classmates that then circulate through social media.

> **"Impact on the victims has been devastating on their reputation, mental health, loss of autonomy, and in some instances, causing them to become suicidal**

In one of the first widely publicized cases last September in Almendralejo, Spain, a physician whose daughter was among a group of girls victimized last year and helped bring it to the public's attention said she's satisfied by the severity of the sentence their classmates are facing after a court decision earlier this summer.

But it is "not only the responsibility of society, of education, of parents and schools, but also the responsibility of the digital giants that profit from all this garbage," Dr. Miriam al Adib Mendiri said in an interview Friday.

She applauded San Francisco's action but said more efforts are needed, including from bigger companies like California-based Meta Platforms and its subsidiary WhatsApp, which was used to circulate the images in Spain.

While schools and law enforcement agencies have sought to punish those who make and share the deepfakes, authorities have struggled with what to do about the tools themselves.

In January, the executive branch of the European Union explained in a letter to a Spanish member of the European Parliament that the app used in Almendralejo "does not appear" to fall under the bloc's sweeping new rules for bolstering online safety because it's not a big enough platform.

Organisations that have been tracking the growth of AI-generated child sexual abuse material will be closely following the San Francisco case. The lawsuit "has the potential to set legal precedent in this area," said Emily Slifer, the director of policy at Thorn, an organization that works to combat the sexual exploitation of children. **AP**

AI tool that thinks like chef creates 1.18 lakh recipes

Can an AI-generated recipe help someone win a cook off ?

Ratatouille", an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered tool, developed by a professor and a research scholar of the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Delhi, could make this possible.

Designed to "think like a chef", the tool can generate more than 1.18 lakh "unique" traditional recipes from 74 countries, claimed its developers -- Prof. Ganesh Bagler and PhD scholar Mansi Goel of the institute's Infosys Centre for Artificial Intelligence.

Moreover, "Ratatouille" -- a name inspired from an animated movie in which a rat helps an aspiring chef become one -- has passed a rigorous test conducted by a 24-member panel of faculty chefs from the Institute of Hotel Management Catering and Nutrition (IHM) in Delhi's Pusa, according to them.

Bagler -- a professor of network science, network biology and computational gastronomy -- and Goel -- a student at the centre -- developed the tool in a lab at the IIIT over nine years using large language models, a technology that drives ChatGPT, a widely used AI-powered platform for writing and learning.

"We began around nine years ago, exploring recipes and ingredient patterns. We have done three main things here. First, we compiled data and created structured databases of recipes, including over 1.18 lakh recipes from 74 countries, along with data on flavour molecules, nutrition profiles and carbon footprints," Bagler told PTI. He said then algorithms were applied to this data to generate "novel recipes" that follow patterns found in existing recipes.

Talking about the test "Ratatouille" underwent, he said, "Finally, we conducted a 'turing test for chefs'. We presented chefs with recipes from our database and AI-generated recipes in a format that made it impossible to distinguish between them."

"We also asked the chefs to determine if the recipes were genuine or computer-generated. We achieved a 70 per cent success rate, meaning the chefs couldn't reliably tell the difference," Bagler said. **AP**

BITS & BYTES

Into the fold

Tech giant Google has announced that it will continue to offer the original Pixel Fold for sale, even with the recent unveiling of its successor, the Pixel 9 Pro Fold.

According to GSM Arena, this decision comes after the Pixel 9 family, including the new foldable device, was officially introduced earlier this week.

Initially, the Google Store marked the Pixel Fold as "no longer available" following the Pixel 9 Pro Fold's announcement, leading to speculation that the original foldable might be discontinued.

However, Google has since clarified that the Pixel Fold will indeed return to the market after the new Pixel 9 Pro Fold hits stores on September 4. For those who missed out on the original Pixel Fold before its brief disappearance, this news is likely to be a welcome relief. **-ANI**

AI benchmark

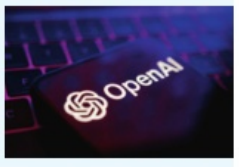
Primate Labs, the creators behind the popular Geekbench benchmarking suite, have introduced a cutting-edge tool to assess machine learning capabilities: Geekbench AI.

Now available for iOS, Android, Windows, macOS, and Linux, this new benchmark is designed to evaluate how well devices handle real-world AI tasks, confirmed GSM Arena. Previously known as Geekbench ML during its preview phase, Geekbench AI is set to provide a look at device performance in the realm of artificial intelligence. The tool evaluates the efficiency and accuracy of CPUs, GPUs, and NPUs (Neural Processing Units) by measuring their ability to perform machine-learning tasks. Geekbench AI delivers three scores for each test: single precision, half-precision, and quantized. **-ANI**

Accounts down

OpenAI said on Friday it had taken down accounts of an Iranian group for using its ChatGPT chatbot to generate content meant for influencing the US presidential election and other issues.

The operation, identified as Storm-2035, used ChatGPT to generate content focused on topics such as commentary on the candidates on both sides in the U.S. elections, the conflict in Gaza and Israel's presence at the Olympic Games and then shared it via social media accounts and websites.

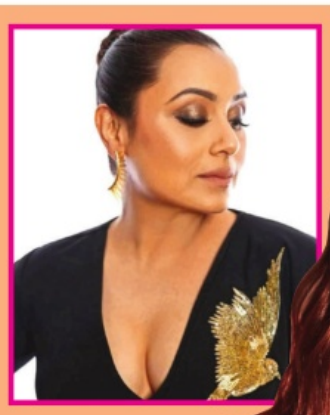


Investigation by the Microsoft-backed AI company showed that ChatGPT was used for generating long-form articles and shorter social media comments. **-Reuters**

 # Firth call
Oscar winner Colin Firth is in negotiations to join the cast of legendary director Steven Spielberg's next feature project

That is up for debate

Throwback to Rani's views on women's safety and Deepika and Anushka's counter-argument



The resurfacing of a 2018 interview featuring prominent Bollywood actresses discussing women's safety has reignited a heated debate online. This discussion, which included Rani Mukerji, Deepika Padukone, Alia Bhatt, Anushka Sharma, Tabu, and Taapsee Pannu, gained renewed attention following a recent horrific incident in Kolkata.

In the interview during the Actress Roundtable, Rani Mukerji's comments sparked controversy. She emphasised that women need to be more proactive in defending themselves. Rani argued that women should be "responsible" for their own safety and suggested that they should learn martial arts. Her stance was that if a woman finds herself in a dangerous situation, she should be prepared to take immediate action. "If you ever come to a situation like that, you have the courage to say 'back off.' Everything relates to what you want in your life," Rani stated. She further elaborated that in such instances, women should ensure that the perpetrator faces immediate consequences, advocating for self-defense tactics such as delivering a swift kick or slap to the attacker, making him "fearful of not doing it again."

However, this perspective was met with disagreement, particularly from Deepika Padukone and Anushka Sharma. Deepika expressed her concern over Rani's suggestion, pointing out that not every woman is built with the kind of resilience or physical capability to defend herself in such situations. "I don't think everyone is constructed with that sort of DNA, unfortunately," Deepika remarked. She challenged the notion that women should bear the burden of protecting themselves, arguing that society should instead focus on preventing these situations from occurring in the first place. "We're now talking about self-defense. Why should it even get to that stage where I need to learn how to defend myself? All of these things are great, but nip it in the bud; that situation itself should not arise," Deepika said.

Anushka Sharma echoed Deepika's sentiments, adding that while self-defense is important, the larger issue lies in addressing the root cause of violence against women. She said the responsibility should not solely rest on women to protect themselves but should involve a broader societal change. **–ETimes**

KHUSHI & PETS

Actress Khushi Kapoor, who made her debut with the streaming debacle 'The Archies', is spending her weekend with her pets.

On Saturday, the actress took to her Instagram, and shared several pictures with her pet dogs/ The pictures show her pets roaming around the house. The actress simply captioned the post, "My home".

Earlier, the actress called her house officially a zoo in a social media post.

Khushi, who is the sister of Bollywood actress Janhvi Kapoor, was seen essaying the role of Betty Cooper in 'The Archies' in which she starred alongside Agastya Nanda, Suhana Khan, Vedang Raina, Mihir Ahuja, Aditi 'Dot' Saigal and Yuvraj Menda.

The film is a live-action adaptation of 'The Archies', a fictional rock band who appeared in the 1960's animated cartoon, 'The Archie Show'. The film, directed by Zoya Akhtar, was dubbed a disaster with critics unanimously panning the film.

Meanwhile, Khushi will be next seen opposite Junaid Khan - the son of Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan in an upcoming untitled film.

The film is being directed by Advait Chandan of 'Secret Superstar' fame, and is an adaptation of the hit Tamil the romantic comedy movie 'Love Today'.

The shoot of the film reportedly started in Mumbai followed by its 2nd schedule in June. **–IANS**

Shocking details of Matthew Perry's death

In a recent disclosure, federal prosecutors have revealed that actor Matthew Perry experienced a severe medical reaction to an at-home ketamine injection just days before his tragic death.

According to E! News, a report by the Department of Justice suggests Perry was left unable to speak or move following the incident on October 12, 2023, a mere 16 days before he was found dead in his Los Angeles home.

Perry, best known for his role in the iconic TV show 'Friends,' was discovered unresponsive in his hot tub on October 28, 2023.

The official cause of death was determined to be "acute effects of ketamine" coupled with drowning. The newly unsealed documents obtained by E! News, have brought to light the details of Perry's condition leading up to his death.

Prosecutors have charged five individuals in connection with Perry's death, according to E! News.

Among those charged is Dr Salvador Plasencia, who allegedly administered a large dose of ketamine to Perry at the request of Perry's live-in assistant, Kenneth Iwamasa.

The DOJ reports that this at-home injection led to a "significant spike" in Perry's systolic blood pressure, causing him to become incapacitated, according to E! News.

Dr Plasencia is facing multiple charges including conspiracy to distribute ketamine, seven counts of ketamine distribution, and two counts of falsifying documents related to the investigation. **–ANI**

Catwoman, but if she directs it

Actor Halle Berry has dropped a tantalizing hint about her potential return to the role of Catwoman.

The actress, who famously donned the feline suit in the 2004 film directed by Pitof, expressed a willingness to revisit the character--under one condition.

According to Deadline, 'The Union' actor was asked by Jimmy Fallon on his show, about the prospect of reprising her Catwoman role.

With a smile, Berry responded, "Maybe, if I could direct it."

This playful hint has fans buzzing with excitement at the thought of Berry taking on both the iconic role and a creative lead. Reflecting on the film's 20th anniversary, Berry recalled her fondness for 'Catwoman', despite its initial critical reception.

"I loved it," she said, though she noted that critics had largely dismissed the film.

However, Berry finds solace in the film's resurgence among younger audiences.

"What I'm happy about is... the children have found it now on the internet," she revealed, adding, "The kids love it. So it's so vindicating because now they're saying, 'It's cool,' and 'What the heck was everybody's problem with it?' So, I'm like, 'I'm so brat now.'"

The film, penned by John Rogers, John Brancato, and Michael Ferris, and based on a story by Theresa Rebeck, starred Berry alongside Benjamin Bratt, Lambert Wilson, Frances Conroy, Alex Borstein, and Sharon Stone.

Despite a hefty USD 100 million budget, 'Catwoman' earned USD 82.4 million globally and faced a critical drubbing, winning several Razzie Awards in 2005, including Worst Picture, Worst Director, and Worst Screenplay, according to Deadline. **–ANI**

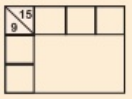
Chai-Time

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

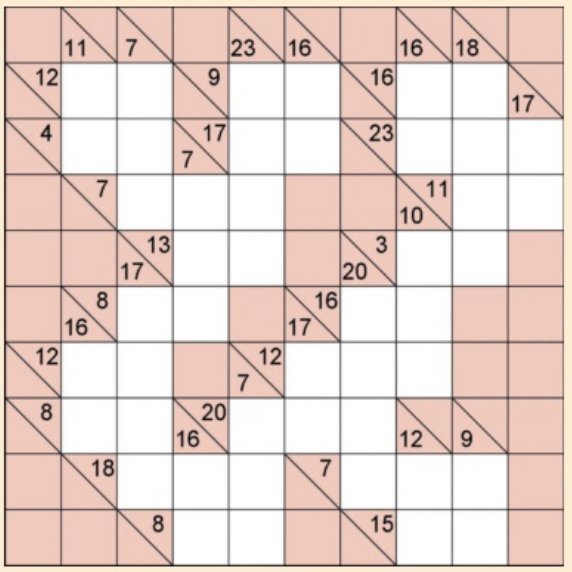
Teen age Frank weighs 72 pounds plus½ of his weight. 6 year old Mary weighs 72 pounds minus ½ of her weight. 2 month old Sue weighs 72 pounds divided by½ of her weight. What are the weights of Frank, Mary and Sue?

Kakuro

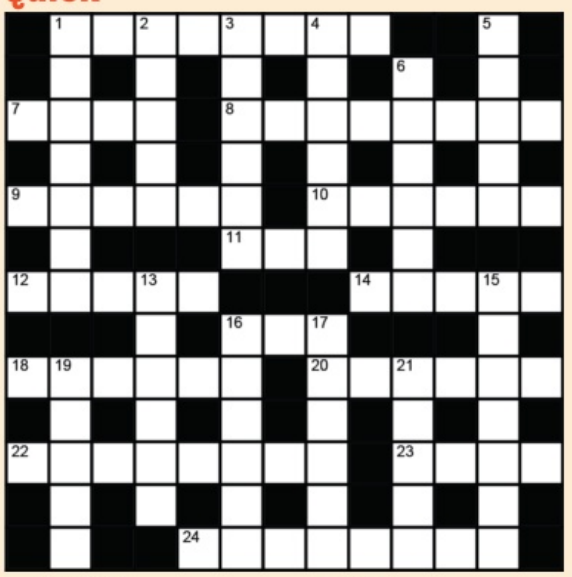
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Remonstrated (8)
7 Famous educational institution on Bannerghatta road (3-1)
8 Salvage or recover (8)
9 Arcane or covert (6)
10 Edible root (6)
11 Acquire (3)
12 Knot in wood (5)
14 Limited in size (5)
16 61 in Roman numerals (3)
18 Blacken or spoil the name of (6)
20 Car house (6)
22 Arriving at? (6,2)
23 Over-nurse (4)
24 New source of oxygen (5,3)

DOWN

1 Point of view (7)
2 Agreed with (5)
3 Worrying about (6)
4 Secure by intimidation (6)
5 Changes location (5)
6 Crown or headband (6)
13 Dried grape (6)
15 Less heavy (7)
16 Accounts book (6)
17 Arctic abodes (6)
19 Destroy gradually (5)
21 Former Indian paceman ___ Pratap Singh (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: J EQUALS U

TQUKPQ GKJ WKZNPLIVWN LZ KFI RLZ, RG ULVP UPVQZI, GKJ OAKJFI QZIQLSKJP NK JZIQPONLZI AVR.

Linemaro

They say dating is a number game. May I have

Mindchow

Inside every cynical person is a disappointed idealist

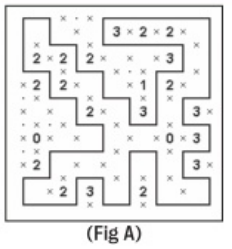
Joke of the day

If it's true that our species is alone in the universe, then I'd have to say the universe aimed rather low and settled for very little

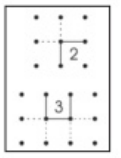
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)



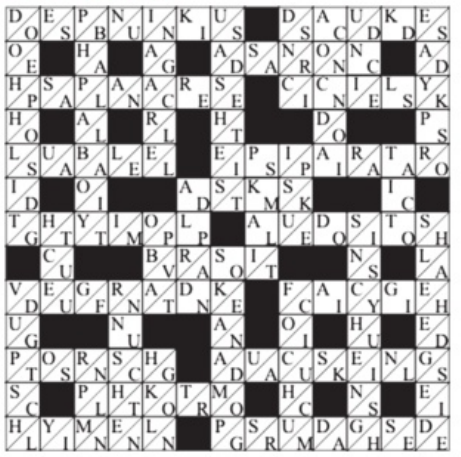
(Fig B) Not Allowed

How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

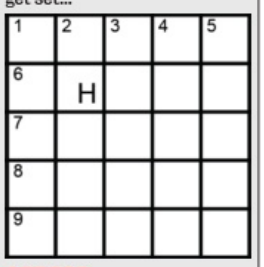
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Teaks; 6 A Khan; 7 Rales; 8 Eliot; 9 Wills

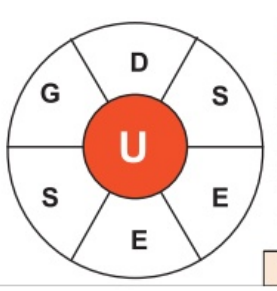
DOWN

1 Tasks; 2 Worth; 3 Ail I a; 4 Nell K; 5 Lease

Mensapuzzle

Here's a "trickle down" puzzle. The rules are simple; you merely change one letter on each line lo make a new word and continue until you reach the final word. (Some trickle downs have alternative solutions.)

VIPER
_____
_____
_____
_____
WARTS



Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

03 Average; 04 Good; 05 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	8	5	7		1	6	2	
2								3
		6				4		
		4	5		2	1		
	2			4			6	
		3	6		9	7		
		7				3		
3								4
	9	8	3		4	2	7	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 9
2 4 4 7

Medium = 19
4 8 8 9

Hard = 11
2 5 8 4

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

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Find at least six differences in details between panels.

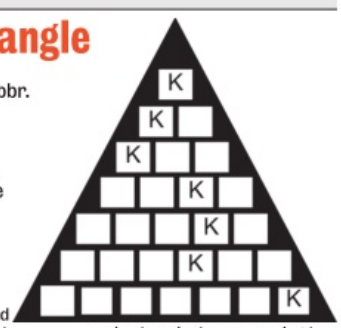
Differences: 1. Arm is lower. 2. Tree has fewer leaves. 3. Man is thinner. 4. Newspaper is larger. 5. Curtain is longer. 6. Window in door is different.

Riddler

Which former Australian cricketer might be a GIN TRICK PONY?

Alpha triangle

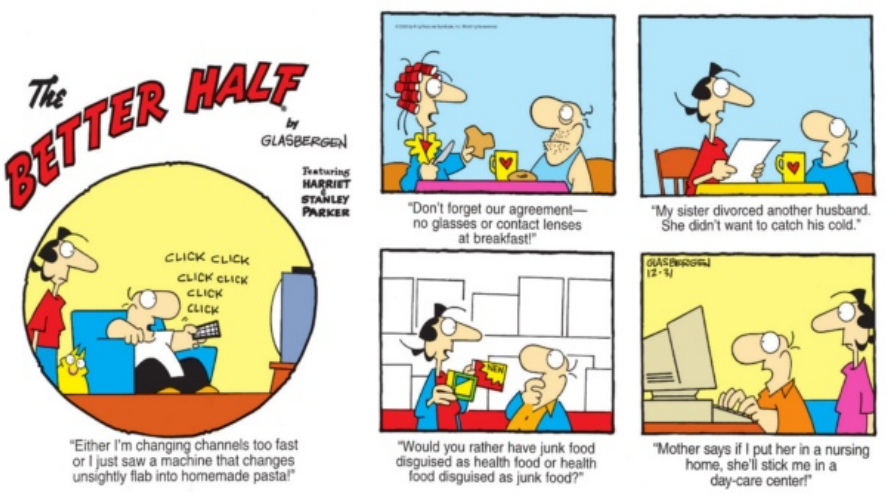
1 Kingly letter!
2 Kinetic energy, abbr.
3 Parrot
4 Grasp
5 Money wagered
6 Woven container
7 Minor misfortune



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
CLICK CLICK
CLICK CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
"Either I'm changing channels too fast or I just saw a machine that changes unsightly flab into homemade pasta!"
"Don't forget our agreement—no glasses or contact lenses at breakfast!"
"My sister divorced another husband. She didn't want to catch his cold."
NEW
"Would you rather have junk food disguised as health food or health food disguised as junk food?"
GLASBERGEN 12-31
"Mother says if I put her in a nursing home, she'll stick me in a day-care center!"

AAHHHH
ZORN! HE'S LOST TO US!
GORDON SHALL PAY FOR THIS!
"FIND HIM! HE MUST NOT ESCAPE!"
FLASH GORDON
IN A LABYRINTH OF TUNNELS BENEATH A HIDDEN FORTRESS, FLASH MOMENTARILY ELUDES GARAKAHN'S GUARDS.
THESE CORRIDORS ARE LIKE A MAZE! HAVE TO FIND A WAY OUT!
WHAT'S THIS?
MIRRORS... IDENTICAL TO THE ONE SENT TO BARIN!
VULTAN, AZURA, PRINCE THUN...THEY'RE BEING SENT TO ANYONE WHO'S EVER OPPOSED MING!
AZURA
VULTAN
WHAT BETTER WAY TO PAVE THE WAY FOR MING'S RETURN THAN DISPOSING OF HIS RIVALS!
KLNAK!
WE SHALL MAKE AN EXAMPLE OF THE EARTHLING. PREPARE THE COURTYARD. FLASH GORDON SHALL HAVE A PUBLIC EXECUTION!
NEXT: BEYOND SALVATION!

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today until evening, you may be impatient and have a lack of confidence, which may reflect in your way of working. Your parent's health may make you upset. Kids' notorious behaviour may make you upset. You should try to focus on yourself and try to avoid scattering your energy into many holes. Investments in risky assets are advised to avoid now.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today you may be happy. You are likely to plan for overseas work-related travel, which will increase your business shortly. Spending money on luxury stuff may improve your lifestyle. But you are advised not to drive yourself towards glamour or addictions, as it may affect your financial health. Stay away from any type of argument at work.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, you are advised to control your way of speaking. Your harsh speaking may affect your family's harmony. You may spend your hard-earned money on buying worthless stuff to maintain your social status, but it is advised not to keep your money loose in your pocket.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may be busy with kids' careers or extracurricular activities. You may take advice from someone to choose career options. You may meet consultants or specialists as well. You may also hear good news regarding kids' results. You may also invest capital into your family business.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today you must control your way of speaking, you should be careful in terms of hidden enemies and opponents. You may be a victim of conspiracy. It is advised to make investments in risky assets. You should avoid lending money; it may not be recoverable easily. It is advised to do meditation and yoga to deal with stress. Love birds are advised to be involved in controversies. Students are advised to work hard.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, job seekers may get new jobs, there are chances of promotions in current jobs. On the business front, you may get new clients, which will be helpful in the growth in terms of profits. Singles are likely to find a good match. In domestic life, you must avoid hiding anything from your spouse otherwise it will create distance between your relationship.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today is a day of success in terms of profession. Your plans will give positive results in terms of profits. There may be good news related to your past investments in terms of gains. Your creativity may help you to improve your professional skills. Job seekers are likely to get a suitable job. Students might improve focus through self-analysis. You may be able to understand the feelings of your spouse.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today until the afternoon, you may be upset. Afternoon onwards elders' blessings may protect you from this messy situation. Your willpower may help you to complete your delayed projects. It is advised to avoid arguments in domestic life. By the evening, you may have gains in terms of past investments.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, the moon is not positive, there are chances that you may not feel well, and you might have health issues. You are advised not to make investments in new business projects, otherwise you may face losses. Students are advised to work hard in their studies. You should avoid rash driving.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you may have mental peace. You are likely to be busy with friends and family. You may enjoy your domestic life, it may increase understanding with your spouse. There is a new partnership in your business. Innovations may help your business to grow. Disputes in the partnerships may be resolved now.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today your good health may make you happy. Your health-related issues are now resolved. You may control your worthless expenditures and new sources of income may likely be opened, which may boost your financial health. Singles may find soul mates in the same community.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today the moon is positive. You may have energy, you may be able to perform efficiently at work. You may also help a needy person, which may create your prestige among people around you. You may spend your time studying intellectual stuff. You may also plan for higher studies to groom your career.

KIDZONE

Ananya Vastare, 10 Years, Insight Academy

Srijan Mitra, 7 Years, Bishop Cotton Boy's School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M Let Frank's weight = 2x lbs
According to the given information:
2x = 72 + x; x = 72; Frank's weight (2x) = 144 lbs

Let Mary's weight = 2x lbs
According to the given information:
2x = 72 – x; 3x = 72; x = 24
Mary's weight (2x) = 48 lbs

Let Sue's weight = 2x lbs
According to the given information:
2x = 72/x; 2x^2 = 72;
x^2 = 36; x = 6
Sue's weight (2x) = 12 lbs

STRIKE OUT

E		A		A		A		A		A		A		A
P	A	L	A	C	E	S		I	C	I	L	Y		
O	L		R		H		O			S				
S	A	B	L	E		E	S	P	A	R	T	O		
I		O			A	S	K	S			I			
T	H	Y	M	O	L		A	U	D	I	T	S		
		U		V	A	S	T		N		L			
D	E	G	R	A	D	E		F	A	C	I	E		
U		U		A		I		H		N		D		
T	O	R	C	H		D	U	C	K	I	N	G		
C		P	H	O	T	O		H		N		E		
H	Y	M	E	N		G	R	U	D	G	E	D		

QUICK

E		F	R	E	S	H	A	I	R					
D		N		E		O		R		E				
C	O	M	I	N	G		T	O		D	O	T	E	
	R		S		D		L		U		H			
D	E	F	I	L	E		G	A	R	A	G	E		
		A		L	I	X	I			I				
G	N	A	R	L		S	M	A	L	L				
	O				G	E	T		E					
H	I	D	D	E	N		R	A	D	I	S	H		
I		N		E		I		O		A		E		
I	M	B		R	E	T	R	I	E	V	E			
P		A		X		D		O						
O	B	J	E	C	T	E	D		M					

MENSA PUZZLE
VIPER, WIPER, VJPES, WIR S, WARS, WARTS

RIDDLER
Ricky Ponting

QUOTE UNCODE
Before you contradict a fair friend, you should endeavour to understand him.

SUDOKU

4	8	5	7	3	1	6	2	9
2	7	9	4	8	6	5	1	3
1	3	6	2	9	5	4	8	7
9	6	4	5	7	2	1	3	8
7	2	1	8	4	3	9	6	5
8	5	3	6	1	9	7	4	2
5	4	7	1	2	8	3	9	6
3	1	2	9	6	7	8	5	4
6	9	8	3	5	4	2	7	1

ALPHA TRIANGLE
K, KE, Kea, Take, Stake, Basket, Setback.

GO FIGURE
Easy
2 + 7 – 4 + 4 = 9
Medium
8 / 4 + 8 + 9 = 19
Hard
8 + 2 + 5 – 4 = 11

LOOP

KAKURO

FAST FIVE

S	T	A	K	E
S	H	A	N	A
A	R	L	E	S
T	O	I	L	E
S	W	I	L	L

BULL'S EYE
guess, GUESSED, sued, suede, used

Volume No 17, Issue No 033 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/22325 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by R.J. Prakashan at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore - 560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru - 560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon - responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

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